



1909

No. 7½

"The Book of Common Praise."

"A Little Leaven Leaveneth the Whole"

"Dead Flies in the Ointment."

***"Take Thou Away from the Noise of Thy
Songs."***

"I will Sing with the Understanding."

B.S' 540 .

E48

"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"—1 Cor. 5: 6.

"Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking flavor."—Ecc. 10: 1.

"Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs,"—Amos 5: 23.

"I will sing with the understanding."—1 Cor. 5: 6.

LETTER NO. 40.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I was pleased to receive your letter of the 23rd inst., in reference to the book called "The Book of Common Praise." You say:—

"I am indeed glad to see we have in our Church some who have the courage to act consistently.

"The attitude of those who, while agreeing with your views, yet accept the book, is hard to understand. I suppose that fear of having to suffer has

something to do with it. I hope, however, they are not all cowards. It is of little account to be called

Protestant if we are not witnessing for the truth, as the real meaning of the word Protestant is

"witnessing for."

"The reply made to our objection here is that Mr. Blank and Mr. Blank, while objecting to some of the hymns, have nevertheless thought it best, considering there are so many good hymns in the book, to accept them. The argument is a poor one, yet our friends have weakened our position greatly. If these, with others of their views, had only stood

“firm and not yielded, we should be in a different position than we are to-day.

“It must be admitted, however, that we are living now in the times called ‘perilous.’ We fear often that even the things ‘that cannot be shaken’ will not remain. The tide of Ritualism and Rationalism has set in and threaten to sweep out from our midst truths upon which our faith rests. The very existence of our Church as the Church of God is threatened, but I believe that these storms that assail us but indicate that the end is near, and bid God’s faithful ones to look up, for His coming draweth nigh.”

I am unable to agree with those who have “thought it best, considering there are so many good hymns in the book, to accept the same.” It would be a strange thing if in a volume containing 795 hymns you did not find some good ones! The very method employed in compiling a hymn book would make this necessary, as it is usual to take, as the foundation of a new compilation, 200 hymns which will be found in half a dozen of the volumes most largely used. But when we go beyond this class I maintain that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to discover a book of its size with so large a number of hymns unfit for a first-class hymn book, as being without poetry, theologically unsound, jingles, dirges, doggerels, and teaching false doctrine, which should not be permitted to appear in any hymn book, whether of the Church of England or other Protestant Communion. Where the book is used it will be a means of educating people down to a lower level rather than of uplifting them, and of spreading abroad false doctrine which our Protestant Churches should in all parts of their services be very vigilant at

the present time absolutely to forbid. I was much struck with the method of a friend in dealing with the question of the smallness of the amount of poison found in the book. He gives this apt comparison:—

“If in a volume of the Ontario Readers recently issued, each portion selected was admirable and universally approved, but four or five selections contained teaching against God, the King, or the Church, would our citizens condone for these improper selections because of the fact that there were ninety-five pieces in respect of which no fault could be found; or would it not rather be held that the fly in the pot of ointment was fatal to all that it contained? And would there not be such an outcry by the parents at these books being used as a means of conveying error to their children as would absolutely prevent their public dissemination? That a number of good pieces should be found cannot atone for even a few which in material matters mislead and teach error. How can a different rule be invoked in the case of the proposed new hymn book which all the members of the Church of England in Canada are asked to approve of, to purchase, to distribute and have in their churches and in their homes as a means of education?”

To my mind it is impossible to controvert this conclusion. And if it be reprehensible thus to teach error in a public school, it certainly is not less so to do this by introducing it into the books employed in the service of God.

Another friend asks me a question similar to one that you present, putting it in this way:—

“Is this a case in which all should follow like

"sheep in the path which has been skilfully engineered, or should not a protest be made by all faithful congregations? No more effectual protest could be presented than, either by rejecting in toto the hymn book, or else using a copy in which blank leaves should replace the objectionable hymns."

I feel no doubt of the responsibility that is cast upon each individual and upon each congregation. There is no control exercised, the whole matter is left open for each one according to his conscientious convictions to accept or reject. It will be a fatal wounding of the conscience of a man or the consciences of the congregation if, feeling that wrong is done in the distribution of the book, it is accepted and distributed.

I am of opinion that this is a time when God will try His people and will number them, looking for the seven thousand faithful men and women that will not bow the knee to Baal.

Abdiel's position was peculiarly noted because "among the faithless faithful only he."

The "Son of Man" looks down to-day on His Churches to see whether amidst prevailing unfaithfulness to His truth He may give the blessing, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2: 10); and renews the warning, "Behold I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3: 11).

This is a time of testing and trying, when, especially, men and women are called upon to show their colours. It is a day of opportunity, when God calls His people from the broad way to walk with Him in the narrow path of truthfulness to Him and His Word. Let us not

fail Him and receive a curse where He desires to give us a blessing.

By the brute force of numbers some of these hymns were, against continuous protest and warnings as to the result, forced into the book to teach the fundamental error of the Church of Rome, to the success of which object these hymns largely conduced. Our Articles distinctly reject this fundamental error of that Church, which is called "the Apostate Church," and we are to-day asked virtually to revoke these solemn conclusions and to replace their teaching with this most damnable error of the Church of Rome. Should we not all, as loyal members of the Protestant Church of England to-day, say "God forbid"?

LETTER NO. 41.

MY DEAR SIR:—

You ask me whether "this thrusting of hymns from Roman Catholic books into a hymn book of our Protestant Church of England is not part of a general scheme, based on an arrangement between leaders of the Anglican Church and of the Roman Catholic communion, whereby there is to be such an assimilation of the doctrines and services that the ground will be thoroughly prepared for the swallowing up of the Anglican by the Romish Church."

I have for years felt no doubt in my own mind that the foundation thought of the Oxford Movement of 1833-34 was to educate the Anglican communion into conformity to the Church of Rome. It was a great educative movement in which the hymns employed were to be a power. There has been for some years in existence a paper styled:

"THE LAMP."

"AN ANGLO-ROMAN MONTHLY."

"In advocacy of the Re-union of the Anglican Church with the Apostolic See of Rome."

It urges that "every Anglo-Catholic Church should read 'The Lamp,' because 'it is the only magazine in the Anglican communion devoted especially to the cause of corporate re-union with the Apostolic See, which is bound to be the supreme issue of the struggle now going on in the Anglican communion between the forces of Catholic authority, and Protestant free thought; and because reconciliation with Rome is the predestined end of the Oxford Movement."

"It stands completely, and uncompromisingly for the entire Catholic faith as defined by the Holy See."

"The position of The Lamp is in reality the true position of the Anglican Church, etc."

Early in the Oxford Movement the leaders, among whom were some of the most Jesuitical men the world ever was cursed with, while they secretly in their congregations sought to win them from their Mother Church to that of Rome, publicly denounced those who called the attention of the people of England to their plan of the campaign whereby the Church of England was to be Romanized. They pretended to denounce the errors of Rome and hypocritically repudiated with great warmth any desire on their part to have any union with her. The representatives of the earlier leaders of the movement now consider that they are so strong that they laugh at the timidity and secrecy of those who initiated the movement, and boldly declare that they are parties to a great "Anglo-Roman Movement," which name they now give to the

earlier "Oxford Movement." They fully anticipate that the hymn books will do as much to-day to Romanize the Anglican communion as they did in the twelfth century to Romanize the Church which had not then adopted transubstantiation as its foundation heresy.

LETTER NO. 42.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I thank you for sending me a copy of two numbers of a "Parish" Magazine published in the Diocese of Nova Scotia. I think that it should be publicly known that there are true men in this Diocese, and therefore take the liberty of publishing a passage from the October and November numbers of this magazine.

(From the October Number of the St. Paul's Parish Magazine, Halifax, N.S.)

"The Rector of St. Paul's, since it first became known that the Compilation Committee of the new hymnal had allowed the insertion of hymns taken from the Roman Breviary, which teach the root errors of the Church of Rome, has constantly and consistently protested in Committee, in Synod, in public and in private, against their introduction. It was an illegal act, a crime against the truth, an outrage to conscience, a sin against unity, a stumbling block to the weak, a betrayal of the principles of the Church of England. The book was thus changed from a source of delight and comfort, to a book of infection, containing deadly error, destructive to the spiritual life. This is not a matter of individual opinion, to be set lightly aside. For the greatest of English hymnologists, a strong and devout High Churchman, the late Lord Selborne, in his article on Hymns in the Encyclopædia Britannica, declared that the sacramental hymns

by Thomas Aquinas were written for the idolatrous festival of Corpus Christi, when what is called the "Holy Wafer," the "Eucharistic God," is worshipped as a king. In these hymns, Lord Selborne declares, "the doctrine of transubstantiation is set forth with a wonderful degree of scholastic precision."

(From the November Number of the St. Paul's Parish Magazine, Halifax, N.S.)

"It was decided at the October meeting of the Vestry, under a resolution moved by Major Chipman, seconded by Col. J. A. C. Mowbray, to call a Parish meeting for the second Monday evening in November, to consider the advisability of using the new Book of Common Praise. The Rector was asked to state in the Parish Magazine the numbers of the hymns to which he takes serious objection. The most objectionable are as follows: Nos. 245, 248, 254, which according to Lord Selborne, the greatest authority the English Church ever produced, teach transubstantiation; No. 238, first verse, teaches the sacrifice of the Mass, as does also 259, and also 397, verse four. Hymn No. 254, verse three, teaches concomitance or half Communion, which led to the denial of the cup to the laity. Contrast 242, which leaves out the thought of "faith," with 383 Hymnal Companion. Verse 1, No. 259, teaches the Real Presence. The word "altar," which has been deliberately expunged from the Prayer Book, is as deliberately introduced in some 12 places, as, for instance 250, verse 1; 251, verse 6; 563, verse 4; No. 245, verse 1, is virtual idolatry. Hymn No. 69, verse 19, teaches prayers for the dead. No. 267 teaches Baptismal Regeneration (see verse 1). In No. 130, verse 4, the Cross is called a 'tree of glory,' but Scripture calls it the 'accursed tree.' Human merit (condemned by Art.

X) is taught in No. 106, 122, 123, 112. There are also a number of hymns to which objection is taken on general principles, for instance, No. 71, part 3, verse 6; 146, 365, verse 3; 653, verse 4; 130, verse 4; 131, 142 refrain, and 251."

It should be strengthening to many in our Church to know that there are men sound in the faith who are determined to stand up for the truth according to their convictions. If each congregation in the Dominion accepted the responsibility that is cast upon it, and quite independently of what may have been said about this book, and what may be the intention of other congregations in respect of it, quietly and seriously, as those accountable for the teaching which they are asked to introduce, carefully perused the objectionable hymns and learned for themselves the error sought to be introduced, and the large number of second or third-rate hymns that go to make up the book, I have such confidence in the Protestantism and good sense of our Laity as to feel that the book as it stands would be rejected and some other means devised to prevent the wounding of the conscience of large numbers of the members of our Church, and at the same time introduce a really first-class volume of hymns.

LETTER NO. 43.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I was very glad to receive from you a copy of the Journal of the Proceedings of the last Synod of the Diocese of Keewatin. It is impossible to lay too much weight on the utterance of this faithful Bishop. It is most unfortunate that in the Synod the Lower House has not the advantage of hearing the utterance of the members of the Upper House—our Bishops. The charge above referred to, however, shows us that, although the Upper

House has followed the plan of giving a single utterance on any subject brought before it, although it may have been carried by a majority only of one, in this particular case, as was confidently asserted, the conclusion was not unanimous, and that the hymn book, with the mild endorsement given and with the warning to each congregation that to it was left the responsibility of acceptance or rejection, was only carried after plain expressions of dissatisfaction with the compilation. His Lordship in his charge says as to this hymn book:—

“There are many hymns in it that, personally, I
“would rather have seen left out.

“At first the idea was without doubt to give this
“hymn book almost an equal position in the Church
“with our beautiful Book of Common Prayer, and
“to make its use compulsory; but, thank God, wiser
“counsels prevailed, and in accepting the report of
“the Committee of the House of Bishops, safeguard-
“ed the Church by the following motion:—

“That the use of the hymn book presented here-
“with be recommended in the public services of the
“Church in Canada, it being understood that noth-
“ing shall be construed as an authoritative pro-
“nouncement upon doctrinal questions, or inter-
“preted as impugning or varying any of the Ar-
“ticles or standards of the Church as set forth
“in the solemn declaration prefixed to the Constitu-
“tion of this Synod.’ This means that the Hymnal
“takes the same place as any other book, it stands
“or falls on its own merits. No Diocese or Parish
“is obliged to adopt it or is bound by it in any
“way.”

His Lordship further says:—

“There are, as I have said, many hymns I would not care to use, or see used in our Churches, but the same things may be said of every other hymn book I know, and because such hymns are there, no Clergyman is bound to use them. There are certainly plenty to choose from. I could have said a great deal more of this matter, but have said almost enough to tire you even now.”

The only other published statement made by any member of the House of Bishops was that made as the Upper House left the Lower to proceed with their work, by the late Archbishop of Toronto, who stated publicly immediately before leaving the platform at the meeting where he presided: “Some of the proposed hymns should be omitted from the book if it is to be used as a Church hymn book.”

We have, therefore, the statement coming from one of its members, that the House of Bishops thought it necessary to safeguard its position, and that of the Church, by the solemn declaration above quoted, and that it refused to make its use compulsory, and threw the responsibility on each congregation to say whether it would use the discredited hymn book or not. We are ignorant of the view of the Bishops, other than the late Archbishop of Toronto and the Bishop of Keewatin upon the contents of the volume. The good Bishop of Keewatin, however, seems to have forgotten that the hymn book is to be used not only in the Church, but in the Sunday School and by the household, and that in distributing and using it the whole contents are open to all the members of the family, young and old; also that it may be pointed to

as the present teaching of our Church and of the distinctness of our movement to the Church of Rome.

I have gone over every hymn in the book, and find that there are thirty-one which, from the doctrinal teaching there found, the members of the Church of England should not be even asked to use, as they must draw the Anglican communion closer to the Church of Rome and serve to alienate us from our brethren of the Protestant communion. Some have sought to explain away the meaning of these hymns and to torture their language so as to make it mean nothing, but these hymns could not have been introduced for their beauty or their poetry, and must therefore have been introduced to endeavour to accustom our people to the Romish doctrine which is only too plainly there found. Surely this is very clearly a case in which might be pleaded in favour of the views of many earnest Christians: "*Quid dubitas ne feceris*"—that is, wherever there is a doubtful hymn and which beyond question injures the conscience of many members of our Church, do not offend them by inserting it. A different rule might be advanced if it was not a question of doctrine, but a mere question of taste as to the beauty of the hymn.

I will ask you to read over and consider these thirty-one hymns which I have marked. They are: Nos. 130, 131, parts 1 and 2; 146, 233, 242, 245, 248, 249, 250, 251, 254, 259, 397, 43, 71, part 3; 38, 106, 112, 122, 123, 267, 270, 279, 643, 285, 280, 347, 365, 485, 563, 653.

Then there are fifty other hymns which should not be found in a first-class collection. These also I have marked. Please read them with care, and I believe you will conclude that the members of our Church should not be asked to accept, circulate or use such a compilation.

There is scarcely a pretence to poetry in them; they are simply very poor prose with an attempt at rhyme, and do not answer the intended purposes of either public worship or perusal in the home. The numbers are: 7, 10, 12, 21, 23, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 61; 69, 76, 77, 78, 86, 87, 141, 142, 148, 165, 167, 184, part 1; 200, 202, 204, 206, 209, 210, 212, 214, 276, 338, 363, 367, 371, 392, 400, 443, 489, 572, 609, 614, 626, 637, 640, 739, 740, 742.

This makes a total of eighty-four hymns which, if they were omitted, would make the volume much richer and better and more fitted for the use intended and would still leave 711 hymns for selection.

LETTER NO. 44.

MY DEAR SIRS—

I have pondered over carefully the question you ask me, "What is the position you think a member of our Church should take at this juncture in reference to our hymn book?"

Forty-five years ago in this Diocese we had very strenuous times, and it became necessary to make great sacrifices financially and to come under a great deal of odium with our Bishop and the Sacerdotal members of our Church. A few of our Clergymen stood fast, and they and their congregations underwent much persecution in their attempt to preserve the faith delivered to our Church. Out of all this battle there came: (a) the Church Association; (b) much education of our people; (c) Wycliffe College; (d) Ridley College; (e) Havergal College; (f) the Deaconess Home; and those congregations that stood as standard-bearers are now the strongest in our city, and God has visibly given them His blessing.

It appears to me that a quiet warfare against the truth has been going on for some time, with increased aggressiveness, to endeavour again to introduce error and to sap the Protestantism of our Church. We have all felt it. The proposed hymn book is a part of this attack. It is generally admitted by our Evangelicals that there are hymns in the proposed book in which false doctrine is taught. Our opponents admit that they desire to have these hymns inserted because they will educate the members of our Church up to the standard of Rome in its most obnoxious feature. Unfortunately, some are led by expediency, and think it better to please the House of Bishops, and, although wounding to a certain extent their consciences, to agree to the introduction of the book. They do not, to my mind, sufficiently consider the sin that is thus being committed, in permitting the introduction of a most noxious and insidious poison among their congregations when they have an opportunity of exhibiting a splendid object lesson to the whole Church, and of striking a blow which will attract all our members to the importance of the matter and to the need of their standing true to that course of conduct in our Church which God has so largely blessed. I feel that in permitting the introduction of the book we are sadly weakening our position as true members of the Church, are opening the door to false doctrine, and are assimilating ourselves with the Sacerdotalists and Ritualists. It is not in the least necessary to do so. If the hymn book that we at present use is unsatisfactory because of the paucity of hymns, it is easy to do what has been done before—have an appendix printed, continuing on the numbers of the hymns to be used with our present book. Or if it is thought better, let us have an up-to-date hymn book, and by its introduc-

tion make a protest which will call the attention of all men to the fact that the truth is dear to us and that we value it beyond money's worth; or, thirdly, use the proposed book with this splendid protest in our edition, which we can make large; let the page appear blank wherever there is an obnoxious hymn, so that the sequence of the numbers will be continued, but the book purged by a blank page replacing the one intended to teach false doctrine, which should not appear either in sermon or in hymn book. This is a time of very great responsibility to us. If we are true and faithful, God will continue to bless us; but if we are not so, we can scarcely expect a continuation of His hand upon us for good in the continuation of the many activities of our Church work. I trust we may be all so guided that we may not look back with regret upon this epoch of our Church history.

Faithfully yours,

S. H. BLAKE.

30th November, 1909.